

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 2333
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1697

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303
July 18, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Many of us in the U.S. House of Representatives believe we have been denied our sacred duty to debate and declare war. You could say that I am disappointed by this. Disappointed because after 16 years in Afghanistan, Congress deserves another vote on this conflict. Disappointed because almost \$1 trillion of taxpayers' money has been spent with no direct goal or strategy. And most importantly, I am disappointed because we continue to lose American lives.

Sir, I am writing today because you seem to have had a change of heart on this issue:

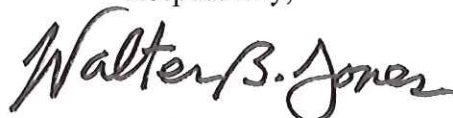
1. In August of 2011, you agreed with Ron Paul and said the U.S. was "wasting lives and money in Iraq and Afghanistan."
2. In 2012, you referred to Afghanistan as a "complete waste," and declared it was "time to come home."
3. The next year, you said on Twitter, "Do not allow our very stupid leaders to sign a deal that keeps us in Afghanistan through 2024-with all costs by U.S.A..."
4. You also tweeted that year, **"Let's get out of Afghanistan. Our troops are being killed by the Afghanis we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense! Rebuild the USA."**

Mr. President, I agree with those remarks, and so does the 31st Commandant of Marines Corps, my friend, and unofficial advisor, General Chuck Krulak. As he said in a recent email to me, **"NO ONE has ever conquered Afghanistan...and many have tried. We will join the list of Nations that have tried and failed."**

Mr. President, that is why I am asking you to review this thinking before approving any troop level increases from General Mattis. I believe you would see great benefit and wisdom in asking Congress to debate and vote on troop level increases as well. You would then have the American people and their elected officials share a decision to send more of our sons and daughters into harm's way. Once you come to a consensus, I suggest you publicly go before the American people and U.S. military to explain the benchmarks you choose for Afghanistan. Previous administrations have not been able to clarify those endpoints, which is unfair to taxpayers and our troops. In the end, we all share this responsibility, and it is time that not only Congress but also the American people have a say. **Sixteen years is enough!**

Afghanistan is the graveyard of empires! We do not want a tombstone to read "United States of America."

Respectfully,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress